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HISTORICAL SKETCH,

OF

No. 13

School District Number Thirteen,

NORTH DANVERS:

George C. Ward.

OR, AS IT IS KNOWN ABROAD,

DANVERS PLAINS:

OR, BY ITS ANCIENT NAME,

PORTER'S PLAINS,

TO DISTINGUISH IT FROM SHILLABER'S PLAINS, SOUTH DANVERS.

George C. Ward.

S A L E M :
PRINTED AT THE GAZETTE OFFICE.
1855.

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Osgood, George

Historical sketch, of school district number thirteen, North Danvers: or, as it is known abroad, Danvers plains: or, by its ancient name, Porter's plains, to distinguish it from Shillaber's plains, South Danvers. Salem [Mass.] Printed at the Gazette office, 1855.

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PREFACE.

Gentle reader,—in dedicating this imperfect historical sketch to my neighbors, and friends, with whom I have lived almost two generations,—who, when I came among you, were small in number, and all of whom have passed away, who were heads of families, except one aged man of eighty-five years, his aged partner, and three females,—this most *impressively* reminds me that I, according to the course of nature, must soon be numbered among those who have departed. But for you who are in the midst of life, with bright anticipations of the future, my sincere wish is, that you may not be disappointed in your expectations of happiness, live to a good old age, and die in peace with all mankind. I can, from my heart of hearts, say that I am no enemy to any *living being*, that my heart expands with generous and kind feelings towards all mankind.

G. O.

DANVERS PLAINS.

DANVERS PLAINS is a beautiful spot of level land, (with the exception of two elevations, which will be noticed hereafter,) of a little over a mile square in extent: bounded northerly and northeasterly by school districts Nos. 5, 4, and 3, which latter includes Putnamville, or as it was formerly designated, Blind Hole; westerly by what was formerly called Tapleyville, now Danvers Centre; southerly and southwesterly by Danversport and Crane river. On its southwesterly side is Walnut Grove Cemetery, containing eleven acres, on an elevated spot of land, through whose bosom two purling brooks run in solemn silence, appropriate for the city of the dead. You have a view from the most elevated part of the Cemetery of a beautiful sheet of water, lying in its immediate vicinity. Avenues and paths are made over the surface of the Grove, each with its appropriate name. A great number of iron and granite fences of various structure, according to the taste of their owners, inclose their several lots. The cemetery is covered over with a grove of oak, ash, walnut, willow, oil nut, beach, pine, fir, cedar, birch, tupelo, and poplar trees, under whose branches and along the streamlets grow a great variety of native flowers. Around the border of the cemetery are two hundred trees, most of them exotics. The repository of the dead ever flourishes, and Walnut Grove Cemetery is no exception to the general rule, as all admit, and more especially those who had friends when on earth who were dear to them, whose mortal remains repose in this consecrated spot. But a few years since, this grove was dedicated to the repose of the dead; and let

any one pass through its avenues and paths, and view its monuments, its tombs and grave stones, and it will *impressively* admonish him that he also is mortal, that he must die and be laid side by side in this company of the dead. On the northerly part of the Plains, and within its limits, is a swell of land about one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the sea, containing forty acres. There are several reminiscences that render this spot interesting. Its original name was Lindall's Hill, from Judge Lindall, who was its owner, besides being the owner of all the land to Beverly in a south-easterly direction to the road by Frost Fish brook; from thence westerly to the corner house and store of Perley & Courrier, up northerly on the road to Topsfield to the house of the late Henry Putnam, now owned by Warren Legroo: on the westerly side from the Hill down as far as the old meeting house road—thence westerly up that road about ten rods above the house of Nathan Cross;—thence in a somewhat devious line in a northwesterly direction to the road from Middleton to South Danvers to land of the late Mathew Whipple, passing which, it terminates near the house of the Messrs. Perry, which stands at the bottom of Lindall's Hill on its northwesterly side. The whole of this land, consisting of more than one hundred and eighty acres, belonged originally to Judge Lindall, who before his death entailed it to his heirs; among whom were Mr. Thomas L. Winthrop of Boston, and Richard Bayard Winthrop of New York. This entailment was of such a nature that it could be legally sold. William Burley, Esq., late of Beverly, was the purchaser.

Who was Judge Lindall, and why did he become a Judge? Timothy Lindall, father of the Judge, was a merchant in Salem, and died December 6th, 1692. Timothy, the subject of this biography, and son of Timothy above named, was born in Salem 1677, graduated at Harvard College 1695. He married Bethia Kitchen, of Salem, May 27th, 1714; she dying, he married for his second wife, Mrs. Mary Hanson, of Lynn. He long resided at North Danvers, then called Salem Village, and was a prominent member of the society over

which, at this time, the Rev. Milton P. Braman, D. D., is pastor. He was a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Counsellor, Justice of the Court of General Sessions, and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, for the County of Essex. He died at Danvers October 26th, 1760, aged 82, in what is called the old Lindall house, and was buried in Salem. On his tomb stone is found the following inscription :

"Here lie the bodies of Timothy Lindall, Esq. Died October 25th, Anno Domini, 1760, aged 82 years. Bethia Lindall, died June 20th, 1720, aged 31; Mary Lindall, (both wives of Timothy Lindall,) died February 8th, 1767, aged 80 years.

I will now state what memorable events formerly took place, connected with Lindall's Hill. About fourteen months before the Revolutionary war commenced, a party of British troops came to Salem from Boston, or Marblehead, for the purpose of securing some cannon which were in the woods in the North Fields of Salem. The people hoisted the draw of the bridge, between North Salem and Salem, and scuttled the boats, which prevented the troops from passing. The late Rev. Dr. Barnard and other patriots of the Revolution had a parley with the commanding officer, which resulted in a COMPROMISE. **WOULD THAT ALL COMPROMISES HAD BEEN AS WELL KEPT!** The compromise was thus: the Americans agreed to let down the draw of the bridge, and permit the British to pass over, provided they did not injure persons or property, and immediately counter-marched back. While this delay was made, the North Fielders and Danvers people secured a part or all of the guns, and transported them through a part of South and North Danvers, to Lindall's Hill, where they were safely secreted, and no doubt did good execution during the war of the Revolution. Lindall's Hill was at this time, and for many years afterwards, a resort for foxes, pigeons, squirrels, and other game, which were abundant. From this hill and the adjacent land the timber for the first Baptist Church was procured. The late Samuel Page, Esq., also here procured timber for a number of ships which were built

at Danvers Neck, now called Danversport. A part of the timber of the ship Independence, the first United States seventy four gun ship, came from this hill.

Another noticeable occurrence took place on the day of the "Great September Gale," of 1815. On that day one hundred and fifty oaks, walnuts, and pines, were literally torn up by the roots and laid prostrate upon the ground. From this time "Lindall's Hill" forest began gradually to disappear, and now all that remains of its ancient forest glory is gone, except here and there a venerable oak.

But a new era is about to take place on Lindall's Hill. The forest and the wild game have disappeared, and already its southwestern and western sides are adorned with substantial houses and shoe manufactories. It is, as I understand, soon to have a road made through its centre, and house lots laid out over its surface to accommodate the public. Whatever may be said about the hills in the neighborhood of Boston, I will venture to assert that in no place in the County of "Old Essex" can so splendid a panoramic view be had as from Lindall's Hill. Salem, Beverly, Marblehead, all the meeting house steeples in Wenham, Hamilton, and Ipswich, are to be seen from this elevation, as well as the broad expanse of the Atlantic.

Another noticeable event of olden times is old-fashioned "Election;" and although what I am about to relate, may be of a humorous nature, still it is true, every word of it. I refer, as above stated, to the last Wednesday in May, at which time the Great and General Court met at Boston, for the purpose of legislation, when the apple tree, lilac and rose, are in their full bloom, and the woods, fields and meadows, are decorated with flowers which fill the air with fragrance, and the birds warble forth their sweetest notes, at early morn and evening shade, and the butterfly makes his gambols from flower to flower, and the bee comes home, laden with his golden treasure, to his curiously wrought house, and all nature rejoices with one glad voice. I mean, old fashioned "Lection Day!" and where is there an old man or middle aged man who is a

native of Salem, Beverly, Lynn or Danvers, and all the adjacent towns does not remember "'Lection Day?" who does not remember how thousands upon thousands congregated on Danvers Plains to see the horses run, the mountebanks tumble, the fandango whirl around, and the drinking of egg-pop, punch, and something a little stronger? For there was no Maine Law in those days, and every man and boy, "did what was right in his own eyes without any one to molest or make afraid."— And then what lots of "'Lection cake," buns, sugar, and molasses gingerbread, pitching coppers, rolling marbles, and nine pins, running and wrestling. There was no fighting; I never saw anybody fight on 'Lection day. People were all too good-natured. Who does not, when he was a boy in those glorious days of fun and frolic, remember old Col. Milan Murphy? for so' he styled himself, especially on 'Lection day. WHETHER he had a commission from General Washington, or he commissioned himself, history does not inform us. At any rate, he was a soldier in the war of the Revolution. He was an African by descent, and for many years before his death received a pension for services rendered to his country. He was accustomed to say, when asked how long he was in the army, "THREE YEARS, two months, and EIGHT days."— Who that ever attended old fashioned 'Lection does not remember Col. Murphy? I see him now, in imagination, marching up street with his old three cornered hat of revolutionary memory: his blue military coat shining with buttons, and trimmed with white, with his old screeching fiddle and screeching voice, playing his one tune, (he never played but one tune,) and that sometimes on one string, and sometimes on no string AT ALL; and if he did not make as good music as Paganini, he pleased the boys who followed him by hundreds, in great glee. But alas! Col. Milan Murphy has gone. His fiddle is gone: his three-cornered cocked hat is gone: his blue coat with bright buttons, faced with white, is gone. Old 'Lection is also gone, gone forever!

In giving a history of "Old Fashioned 'Lection," and my military hero, Col. Murphy, I did not consider that man is not

made to live alone. The Col. thought of that long before I was born, and, notwithstanding he was a military man, took unto himself a wife, who was a bright mulatto, and was of General Pepperell's family, of Portsmouth, N. H. She said HE was her father. Whether he was a father to her by kindness towards her as a servant, or in some other way, history does not inform us. She called herself "Lady Pepperell." She was smart, active, and neat as a pin. She delighted in having a bonnet trimmed off in highest style, with blue, **Y**ELLOW, and red **R**IBBONS. It was not made in **M**ODERN fashion, but presented a good front, partly to keep her head warm, and partly, perhaps, to keep her from **T**ANNING. Take it all and in all, it was a good sort of a bonnet: none of your **H**ALF bonnets of the present day, **A**LL on the **B**ACK part of the head. What a glorious sight was Lady Pepperell, on 'Lection day, with her many colored, ribboned bonnet, and her red, yellow, and blue gown, flaunting forth with all the dignity and pride even of a Queen or a President's Lady ! But, alas ! in an unlucky day, Lady Pepperell was unwell, and went to Salem to get some cream of tartar. A careless boy gave her arsenic, the poor woman came home, took it, and was a corpse the next day. But the Colonel, after a **S**UITABLE time passed, in lamenting his lost one, began still to think, "it is not good for man to live alone." He went to old Andover, the residence of the late Rev. William Symmes, D. D., and there introduced himself to "Happy Freeman," and asked her if she would be his wife. "Happy," being in a happy mood, had no objections to being happier, accepted the Colonel, who chopped wood for Dr. Symmes in the day time, and courted Happy all night, for aught I know, for I was not there to see. At any rate Dr. Symmes married them, and the Colonel brought her to Danvers Plains, where she lived happily with him for many years.— Having been a servant to Dr. Symmes, she understood well the art of cooking, and the writer of this sketch has eaten his part of **M**ANY a whortleberry pudding of her making. There was no one who could make "'Lection cake" equal to Happy's, as many an elderly lady now living will testify. But Happy has

followed the Colonel, and gone to that bourne whence no traveller returns. Peace to her ashes.

As I have given a history of old fashioned "Lection," and more especially of Col. Murphy, and his wives, which I said was true, every word of it true, I am now about to relate a history of Sam Hyde, and his exploits. Although what I am about to relate, may be doubted by some people, nevertheless, I will relate them as they have been handed down to us in our day. Sam and Jo Hyde were brothers, and their wigwams were located, one west of the old Porter house, at Danversport, another probably on "Lindall's Hill," another up in the "Bush." They were real "Native Americans," none of your modern mushroom "NATIVE AMERICANS," whose ancestors came across the big waters. They were Indians, the only "NATIVE AMERICANS" of which history gives us any account. But to my story; Sam and Jo Hyde had the reputation of being great liars, but more especially Sam, and it is a saying unto this day, both in the United States, and some say across the Atlantic, when any one tells what is not true, "you lie like Sam Hyde." I will relate some of his exploits. He said one day he went out a gunning, when he saw sixty humming birds, sitting on sixty posts, sixty feet apart; he had his gun loaded with but one shot on the top of the powder, he fired, and that one shot passed through the eyes of the sixty humming birds, killing them all, of course. Now this may be true for aught I know, but I call it a pretty tough story. Sam relates, that at another time, he went a hunting after foxes, probably on "Lindall's Hill," for foxes and squirrels were abundant there in olden times; he had a dog with him, which got scent of a fox, and, running furiously, struck against a sharp rail, split himself into two equal parts; Sam, in his hurry, (not willing to lose the fox,) put him together, two feet up, and two feet down, and he affirmed that he was a smarter dog ever after, for when he got tired of running on two legs, he would change and run on the other two. I have a little doubt about the truth of this story of Sam's, but it is not a much tougher one than the one I am about to relate, from Charles Bell's Surgery. It is this: two men, he writes, got into a dispute.

and one of the combatants bit off his antagonist's nose. This so enraged him, that he followed him, and gave him a sound thrashing, then went back, picked his nose out of the gutter, washed it, put it back to its place, and it became as sound as ever. We Doctors would say at LEAST, it was a very successful case of healing by the first intention. At another time Sam and Jo, for it required both to make a story complete in all its parts, sometimes:—the exploit was this:—Jo said, “me went up to the moon and drove a spike through it.” “Well,” says Sam, “me clum up and clinched it.” I believe wings have never been invented by man, that would enable him to fly like a bird. Balloons were not invented at that time, and how Sam and Jo performed this exploit, rather staggers me. I think some people would call this story a big lie.

A grandson of the late Hon. Sam. Holten, informs me that his grandfather told him when a boy that one of Sam's neighbors lost his horse, and called upon him to know if he had seen his horse, “Yes,” says Sam, “me see him a little while ago, and he ate a peck of my clams, me wish you would keep him at home.”

I will close the history of Sam and Jo Hyde by giving another instance of their great resources in exigencies. It happened one day that they could procure nothing by hunting, and they were destitute of food and fire water. Sam told Jo that he must lie down and die. Jo lay down in the wigwam, and said he was dead. Sam asked him if he was CERTAINLY dead; Jo said, “me is certainly dead.” With the assurance of Jo that he was dead, Sam started and called upon Gov. Endicott, whose house was within half a mile of his wigwam.—The Governor says, “Sam, you look very sorrowful, what is the matter?” Sam said, “me sick, me very sorry.” “What makes you so sorrowful?” Sam said to the Governor, “Oh! dear Governor, Jo is dead.” “Is Jo dead?” said the Governor; “how did it happen, and what killed him?” “Oh we go, out hunting, find no game, Jo tired, have nothing to eat, come home sick, lay down and die.” “Well, what shall I do for you?” said the benevolent Governor. “Me got no money to bury him,” said

Sam. The Governor upon this gave Sam a handsome sum of money, which Sam and his departed brother's spirit spent for fire water. A few days after, when they had become sober, Jo was accosted by the Governor, his generous friend, who told him he thought he was dead. "Oh no," said Jo, "me no dead." "Why, your brother Sam told me so." "Then he tell one very big lie, that all me know about it." Immediately after, Sam met the Governor, who told him that ~~he~~ had told a lie, for he said Joe was dead. Sam replied to the Governor, "Joe was certainly dead, for he said so, and if he was not dead, he told one big lie."

Thus I have related some feats of Sam Hyde and his brother, which have been handed down by aged persons to the present time, by a number who are now living, and others who have passed away to a better world; but whose stories of their lives are vivid in my memory, although related many years since. These poor, ignorant aborigines form but an ITEM of the many red men who were once lords of this civilized and beautiful New England, which was once their heritage, and from which we have expelled them, cheating and wronging them. YES! we a CHRISTIAN people, who have the light of CHRISTIANITY, of knowledge, of refinement, which renders us a happy and contented people, we who have houses dedicated to the God of our fathers, wherein to worship him according to the dictates of our own consciences, "with none to molest or make us afraid," ought to make great allowance for these poor, ignorant beings, who were governed only by the DIM light of nature, who knew not a God, a Saviour, and had no proper perception of the immortality of the soul, of a future and glorious existence, of moral responsibility, of the advantages of civilization. Can any marvel at the ABSURDITIES and gross lies of poor old Sam Hyde and his brother? How IMPRESSIVELY should it remind us of the inestimable privileges we enjoy, as a civilized and Christian people, and swell our hearts with gratitude to the author of all we enjoy, and all the hopes we cherish of the future.

"Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind,
Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind."

For many years, Danvers Plains was a noted place for military musters, two of which, occurring many years since, I will notice—those of 1809 and 1813. In 1809, the long embargo, under the administration of Mr. Jefferson, left many people idle, and many supposing there would soon be war, the attention of the community was directed to arming and disciplining the militia; and in the autumn of this year, the First Brigade of the Second Division was mustered, under the command of the late General Eben Goodale, on Danvers Plains. The line extended a mile, beginning where Perley & Courier's store now stands, and terminating in a direct line, near the house in the field, then belonging to the father of the late Hon. Elias Putnam. The ground is so level that you could easily see the horses and men of the cavalry, from the starting point of the line, to its termination. The number of troops under arms, was two thousand five hundred: and I shall never forget how, on that bright autumnal morning, the Salem regiment, with its numerous independent companies, and well dressed militia, with their bands of music, marching through the Plains, to form in line. That was a great day for Danvers. We had the Governor of Massachusetts, Christopher Gore, to inspect the troops, who, with the officers, and invited guests, partook of a dinner, under a large pavilion. No one was killed or wounded in the Sham Fight, which took place in the afternoon of that day.

The other muster, to which I have referred, occurred in 1813, the second year of the last war with Great Britain.—This was the Brigade Training, under command of Gen. David Putnam, of Salem. The number of troops under arms, was three thousand. The line was formed in the upper part of the Plains, towards Topsfield, and extended through the whole Plains, and terminated at the bridge, at Frost Fish Brook, which divides Beverly from Danvers. It was a pleasant day, in the month of October, and the concourse of spectators was immense, covering the brow of Lindall's Hill, with one dense mass of men, women and children. There was a Sham Fight, and a fort was made on Lindall's Hill, and filled

with soldiers. Of course it was stormed, set on fire, and burnt to the ground. No lives were lost, no blood was shed, and no damage done, except that done to one soldier, who lost his nether garment.

The only time that the Fourth of July has been celebrated in Danvers, by a public demonstration, for the last fifty years, was on Danvers Plains. About fifteen years since, there was a celebration irrespective of party. The oration was delivered at the Baptist Church, at Danversport. After the public exercises at the Church, a procession was formed, and marched, with music, to Lindall's Hill, where there was erected a large pavilion, under whose shelter was spread a feast composed of all the delicacies of the season. Who were some of the most prominent men who met that day to commemorate the anniversary of our country's liberty? I will answer, the late Hon. Daniel P. King, who presided at the festival; Mr. Kinsman, the orator of the day; the Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, and the Hon. Elias Putnam. What a list of distinguished men, who, but fifteen years since, were on the earth, beloved, respected, and trusted by this community in offices of great responsibility. All of them were my friends and acquaintances, (except Mr. Kinsman, whom I did not personally know,) and more upright, more pure minded, more patriotic, and more respected and beloved individuals cannot be found in these times of "Young America." Let me die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his."

Why was Danvers Plains formerly called Porter's Plains? In 1638, I find that Enos Porter arrived in New England; and the account states that he had three daughters. No mention is made of that individual, as coming to Danvers, but I am informed by Col. Warren Porter, a grandson of Benjamin Porter, that his grandfather informed him that a man by the name of John Porter, came to Danvers in a canoe, passing from Salem up the river, by the east of Waters' river, near Danvers Iron Factory, and the New Mills, and landing at the Creek on the Plains; that he built him a tent near the old Porter house and followed the occupation of a tanner. The remains of his tan

yard were some years since discovered by the late John Page. He afterwards built a house a little to the east of the main road, through our village, which house is now standing and inhabited, although in a dilapidated state. Below this in Danversport, on the other side of the street, was another house which has been removed, and a neat cottage built in its place. Both of these houses originally belonged to the Porter family, as did all the land on the south side of the Plains, beginning at Frost Fish Brook, thence running in a westerly direction, to where the old Ipswich road is crossed, by Village street, near North Danvers depot, thence in a southerly direction to Crane River Bridge, thence running by that river to the northerly part of Danversport, thence easterly across that village to Porter's River, thence up that river, northerly to the bounds first mentioned. Mr. Porter had two sons, one of whom migrated to Wenham, and formed a family of that name, whose descendants still continue in that town. Thus much of traditionary history of the Porter family.

Mr. Hanson states, in his history of Danvers, which he published a few years since, "that George Porter, in 1649, owned Danvers Plains." This is a broad assertion, but is not historically true; for I have a deed which gives metes and bounds, that Timothy Lindall owned the principal part of the Plains, that lies north of the road leading from Beverly to Danvers. This gives him one hundred and eighty acres, a PRETTY large slice of George Porter's farm. By all the authentic knowledge I can collect, the Porters owned two HUNDRED AND TWENTY acres, which is at the south side of the road leading from Beverly to Danvers. Mr. Hanson farther says, in his history of Danvers, at which time the Hon. Samuel Putnam ~~WAS~~ LIVING, "that the Hon. Samuel Putnam was (is) owner of the land which was Nathaniel Putnam's." Now it so happens, that the largest half of the farm that belonged to the late Hon. Samuel Putnain, came from Timothy Lindall's estate, as see a deed which I publish in the appendix, and of which I have an authenticated copy, from the Register of Deeds office. Accuracy and truth are the life of history.—

Another ancient document, to disprove Mr. Hanson's account, is the following :—Jonathan Porter has a grant of twenty acres of land, 1636—July, 1647, he is styled Sergeant Jonathan Porter, has two HUNDRED acres of pasture land—1649 he is one of the **SEVEN MEN**—Oct. 2, 1654, sells unto James Chilister, a dwelling house and land adjoining. It appears he moved to Huntington, Long Island, N. Y., and died about 1659, as from the following record, Eunice Porter, late wife of Jonathan Porter, of Huntington, Long Island, deceased and lawful executrix, of his last will and testament, appointed Roger Haskell, of Salem, her attorney, July 19, 1660.

The last ancient document, concerning the Porter family, I received from the Rev. Joseph B. Felt, the author of the *Annals of Salem*, who is a thorough antiquarian. I will transcribe the letter **VERBATIM ET LITERATIM**.

BOSTON, DEC. 26, 1854.

DEAR SIR.

Yours came duly to hand. I have supposed that Danvers Plains was formerly called Porter's Plains, after the noted John Porter, who was long distinguished for his agricultural skill, as "Farmer Porter." There appears to have been a George Porter, of Salem, whom I find mentioned 1647, but I very much doubt whether he owned land enough anywhere, to give it the name of a Plain. It will be well, however, for you to search the book of land grants, in the hands of the city clerk, and also the Register of Deeds volumes. John Porter, who had represented Hingham, in General Court, 1644, bought Elder Samuel Sharp's farm, northward of Rev. Samuel Skelton's, Dec. 3d, 1643, and probably moved to Salem, in the course of twelve months after he made such a purchase. While I find no descendants of George, I do of John. John was long of the Selectmen, in his first place of abode, and Representative in 1688. He died September 6th, 1676, aged about 80. By will he left the following family : Mary, his widow, alive in 1678. Children : John, noted for rebellion against his parents, and was confined in prison, and made a great stir by appealing to the King's Commissioners, then on a visit to New England ; Joseph, who married Anna Hathorne, and Benjamin, who married Elizabeth Hathorne, both leaving a large number of children ; Mary, wife of Thomas Gardner, she leaving three children ; Sarah ; Samuel, who had one son, John ; and Israel. The last was aged 32, in 1678. John sen. left over £3000 in real estate ; two negro servants, and three English servants. Joseph Porter, sen., died Dec. 12, 1714, and his son Joseph, died Dec. 8, 1714, near together. The rebellious John died March 16, 1683-4. If John, senior, gave name to the Plains, you can probably as-

certain, as one means, through his descendants. Therefore I have been so far particular. I have not the papers and records nigh at hand to make an investigation of land titles.

Very respectfully your friend and servant,

JOSEPH B. FELT.

N. B. John Porter united with the First Church of Salem, 1649, and Mary Porter, supposed to be his wife, joined it in 1644.

I will now give what the true limits of the Porter's grant was, as near as I can, having been to considerable expense and much tedious research. The boundary of that part of the Plains, which originally belonged to them, is as follows, viz : Beginning at Frost Fish Brook Bridge, thence running southwesterly on the old Ipswich road, to near the depot of the Essex Railroad, crossing Village street, at that point ; thence running on the old Ipswich road, in a southeasterly direction, to Crane River Bridge, thence easterly by that river, comprising the northerly part of Danversport, (the southerly part of Danversport was granted to Skelton, to the amount of two hundred acres; I find by an ancient document, that Danversport contains three hundred acres,) and terminating at Porter's river, thence running up that river to the bridge over Frost Fish Brook, the bounds first mentioned, and containing, according to an ancient document, two hundred and twenty aeres. A number of the descendants of the Porter family, with whom the writer was once acquainted, lived within the limits of the Plains, who have now departed for a better world. Among these was Gen. Moses Porter, an officer who served during the war of the Revolution, and held his commission in the standing army until his death, which occurred some years since, and whose mortal remains are entombed on the Plains. That he was a faithful and trusted military commander is evident, by his receiving a commission from Gen. Washington. Zerubbabel Porter, his brother, was an inhabitant of the Plains; he was a man of sound sense, a great reader, and that he was respected by his neighbors and friends ALL KNOW, that had the privilege of his acquaintance. Moses Porter, another descendant of that race, settled in West Boxford, nearly opposite the

church of the late Peter Eaton, D. D. This Mr. Porter I remember sixty years since, when I was a boy, he was then a very aged man, and a respectable farmer; he had a son, who was a physician, married and settled in Biddeford, Me., had three daughters, HARRIET, Paulina and Isabella, and who were my schoolmates over fifty years since. Harriet Porter was married to Lyman Beecher, D. D., as his second wife, and became stepmother to Harriet Beecher Stowe, who is celebrated both sides of the Atlantic, as the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mrs. Stowe informs me that, "Though not a child of Harriet Porter in the flesh, I am in the spirit, as I feel that it is owing to her faithful and unremitting instruction in my early life, that my religious character and principles were formed. I have every reason to remember with increasing gratitude, the benefit which I derived from her instruction and example."

Another distinguished individual was Bartholomew Brown, Esq., born on Danvers Plains, in a house that formerly stood near where Mr. W. Legroo's house now stands. He removed in early life to Sterling, in this State. He was educated at Harvard College, and studied law, which he practised in Sterling, Bridgewater and Boston. He was a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts about fifty years ago. In company with Judge Mitchell, he compiled the Bridgewater collection of music. He was for a time editor of the New England Farmer. He was a great friend to agriculture, and to the last year of his life was a constant contributor to various public journals. He wrote the calendar in Thomas's Farmer's Almanac for sixty years, including the one for 1855. He died in Boston the present year, (1854,) aged over 80 years.

For more than eighty years the manufacture of bricks has been successfully and profitably carried on at Danvers Plains. The late Deacon Joseph Putnam, and Israel, his brother, made bricks here in the pasture east of the centre of this village, towards Frost Fish Brook. For some cause they discontinued the business, and sold the land to the late Mr. Eben Berry. The above named gentlemen were nephews of the late **GENERAL ISRAEL PUTNAM**, one of the heroes of the revolution. I

believe the first person that manufactured bricks in Danvers, was the late Col. Jeremiah Page; he continued the business to the close of his life, with profit to himself and benefit to the community. The late Mr. Nathaniel Webb likewise pursued the same business of brick making, many years, in the yard opposite Col. Page's, and accumulated a handsome competence. After the decease of Col. Page, which took place June 1806, his son, the late John Page, Esq., and his brother in law, Mr. John Fowler, carried on the business in copartnership, a few years, when the copartnership was dissolved. Mr. Fowler went to Ohio, where he died. Mr. Page continued the business with great profit to himself, and benefit to the community, to near the close of his life, and accumulated a handsome independence. I believe the first **CLAPPED** bricks that were made in Massachusetts, were made by him. The manner of making clapped bricks was in this way: a brick partly dry, was more consolidated by applying flat pieces of board to the brick before it was heated in the kiln. This was slow work. Shortly after this process of smoothing a brick was adopted, some ingenious mechanic invented a machine by which a number of bricks were pressed at the same time, greatly facilitating their preparation for the kiln. Thence originated the name of **PRESSED** bricks, by which process, at the present day, all our **PRESSED** bricks are made. Mr. Page had an extensive trade in selling pressed bricks in all the principal cities and towns in New England, and even extended his business to New York. Many handsome buildings in the above named cities and towns, are adorned with Page's **PRESSED** bricks. Since he retired from the business, but few have been made on the Plains, only two hundred thousand at the highest estimate the last year.

I will now give a sketch of what Danvers Plains was at the beginning of the last half century, and what it is at the present time, stating its progress, and business. At that time it contained twelve dwelling houses, two of which were licensed taverns, one store, one blacksmith's shop, one butchery, two brick yards. The business at that time was principally brick-

making, to which I have before alluded. From 1806 to 1816, business was at a stand, as we had to pass through the embargo and war. After the war, in 1816, we had sixteen houses, and one hundred and thirty inhabitants. The children on the Plains, until this time, had to attend school at Danversport. In 1801 a number of the inhabitants of Danvers Plains, unwilling the smaller children should travel to Danversport to obtain instruction, called a meeting for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of procuring a small school house, and a piece of land on which to set it. The meeting was organized, and Deacon Gideon Putnam, (father of the late Judge Putnam,) was chosen moderator; John Fowler was chosen clerk. Voted, that Gideon Putnam, Ezra Batchelder, and Timothy Putnam, be a Committee. They attended to that duty, purchased a small school house in Middleton, and removed it to the Plains. The house was sixteen by nineteen feet, ~~UNLATHED~~, and of course without ~~PLASTERING~~. In this humble dwelling, a school was kept in the summer-time by female teachers, for fifteen years. No aid was given us by the town. The school was supported by private subscription, until we formed a new District in 1816. Being few in number, and not rich, it seemed rather too much for our feeble purses, nevertheless we took courage, put our shoulders to the work, formed school District No. 13, built a school house at the cost of six hundred and fifty dollars, including land, and drew from the town the ~~ENORMOUS~~ sum of sixty dollars for the first year. The summer school was supported by subscription, the number of scholars was twenty-five. From this time the Plains gradually increased in population and wealth, the brick making kept increasing, the late Mr. Page having two yards on the Plains, and two out of the village, making in some years a million and a half to two millions of bricks. A number of shoe manufactories were built, and much profitable business was done. Our population increased so rapidly that our old school house was too small to accommodate the children. A new brick building was erected, at a cost, with the land, of three thousand dollars. At the

present time, there are three schools, Grammar, Intermediate, and Primary, one taught by a male, and the other two by females. Such were the prospects, and such the flourishing state of the village, and from small beginnings we increased in population and wealth so much, that by the help of some of the inhabitants of Danversport, Putnamville, and other parts of North Danvers, we formed a new religious society of the congregational order. After this we built a meeting house, at the cost of eight thousand dollars, including the land, over which society we settled a minister. Thus I have given an account of our prospects and progress up to June 10th, 1845, when in mid-day, a fire burst out in the centre of our beautiful village, destroying houses, shops, and shoe manufactories, to the amount of seventy-five thousand dollars, bearing heavily upon a number of our enterprising, and industrious citizens. Not long after this fire, a slaughter house, with its contents, was burnt, loss three thousand dollars. About four years since, our first beautiful church was set on fire by incendiaries, and destroyed, loss seven thousand dollars. Thus, within the last nine years, we have lost by fire, **EIGHTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS**; but notwithstanding this great loss, our enterprising citizens did not give up in despair; they went to work with zeal and courage; the burnt district, except one lot, is covered over with substantial shops, and shoe manufactories, including a bank building, forty-five by sixty feet, three stories high; the lower story is of granite, the front **RUSTICATED**. The front and ends of the other stories are of Danvers pressed brick. The basement consists of two spacious rooms, suitable for stores. One half of the second story will be occupied by the Village Bank, and Danvers Savings Bank, the entrance to which will be in the centre of the building, by a stair way of easy rise, **EIGHT FEET** in width; the doorway is formed by a granite arch. The other half of the floor will be for offices. The third story is reached by a flight of stairs five feet wide, it is proposed to use this story as a public hall; which will be one of the best in the County; the stud is fifteen feet; it will be unsustained by pillars, or supports of any kind. The hall, not

including the gallery, is forty-eight feet by forty-three, with two ante rooms, fourteen feet square. The capital of the Village Bank is **TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND** dollars. The deposits in the Savings Bank are **ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND** dollars.

In giving a history of the Congregational Society in this place, the sketch was general, no reference being made to the clergymen, who have officiated from its first formation. Religious services were performed in the school house belonging to the inhabitants of this village. The Rev. Mr. Thayer, now settled in Windham, N. H., was employed by the society until the church was built ; in consequence of this, the society was increased by a number joining with us. Mr. Thayer never was a candidate for settlement. After the church was erected, and before we had any regular meeting, to decide upon the propriety of employing any one as a candidate. Mr. Thayer left, he had many warm friends among us, and the writer of this sketch was one who regretted his sudden departure ; we were about to take into consideration the propriety of employing him as a candidate. He is happily settled over a united people ; he is a most faithful minister, and talented man. After his departure, we gave a call to another gentleman who did not accept. Subsequently, the church and society made choice of the Rev. Mr. Tolman, as their minister. He was settled, and continued with them for about two years, when some difficulty took place between the Society and Mr. Tolman, no uncommon thing in the mutability that exists between churches and ministers, at the present day. He asked for a dismission from his people, and was regularly separated by a mutual Ecclesiastical Council. Shortly after he was settled in South Dennis, in the County of Barnstable, and continued a number of years with a people that valued him highly. But in consequence of impaired health, caused by the state of the climate on the seashore, he asked a dismission from his people, which was granted. He then was settled over the church and society in Tewksbury, of which the late Rev. Jacob Coggin was the former minister ; and I am informed that

great cordiality and unanimity exist between him and his people. Our present beloved minister, Rev. James Fletcher, was settled over the church and society, June 20, 1849. A little more than a year after his settlement, the church was destroyed by a fire, lighted by the torch of incendiaries, as has been before related. This was a great calamity to the society, and our young pastor. Nevertheless we were not disheartened. We had the basement story standing, the land and insurance on the burnt church, was six thousand dollars, to which was added, by subscription, two thousand dollars more. Preparations were immediately made for the erection of another church, on the same site, which was completed in the course of a year. This is a more beautiful house than the former. The spire is one hundred and forty five feet from the basement; the length of the house is eighty two feet by fifty four; length of the part where the pews are located, 70 feet by 54,—number of pews below, eighty-two, and six in the gallery. All the pews in the body of the house, (but two, which are free) are sold or let, one of the best evidences that our minister is highly esteemed; and I do not think there is in the County of Essex a more united Church and Society. The walls and ceiling over head are handsomely frescoed. Within two years a clock, at a cost of six hundred dollars, has been placed in the tower of the steeple; an organ of good tone, at a cost of **TWELVE HUNDRED** dollars, has been placed in the gallery, where a place was prepared for its reception when the house was built. We think much of our house and our minister, as most societies are apt to, and many persons who are not interested in the matter, agree with us on **THIS** subject. In the account I have given of "Lindall's Hill" in the former part of this historical sketch, I did not allude to the old Lindall house. I will therefore give a description of its location and antiquity. The Lindall house is an old unpainted building, which is situated at the base of "Lindall's Hill," abutting on the road leading from Danvers to Topsfield, and the road leading from Beverly to Middleton; both roads crossing at its location. The age of the **OLD PART** of the house, no person now living has any

recollection ; probably it is the oldest on the Plains ; as I am informed by an aged lady, who, with her heirs, are now in possession of it. An addition was made to it by Judge Lindall, an account of which has been handed down by some of our oldest inhabitants. The curious antiquarian who may pass through Danvers Plains to Topsfield, will easily discover it, as there are only three unpainted houses on this road, out of one hundred and forty that are painted. I have related what was the population of Danvers Plains, and the number of houses, and what was its principal business fifty years ago. I will now give a history of what it is now. The number of inhabitants is one thousand one hundred ; the number of dwelling houses, one hundred and forty ; the number of children, between the ages of four and sixteen, two hundred and fifty. There are two school houses within the district ; the primary, and intermediate schools are in the brick school house, where the smaller children receive instruction throughout the year, from female teachers. The grammar school is taught by a male teacher, which likewise is continued through the year. The sum appropriated by the town for their instruction, is one thousand and one hundred dollars. The High School of North Danvers, is located on Sylvan and Village street, on the Plains. A building is in process of completion, its length is seventy, its breadth forty-five feet, and two stories in height, with a handsome cupola on top. The upper story is designed for the High School, the lower story for a Town Hall. There are eight shoe manufactories on the Plains, some of them large and spacious. The number of pairs of shoes manufactured the last year, was seven hundred and ten thousand ; estimated value four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This is but a small number compared with what are manufactured in Danvers, which has a population exceeding **TEN THOUSAND**. There is a manufactory of enamelled leather, estimated investment, thirty thousand dollars. Another factory to prepare polished leather, estimated investment, fifteen thousand dollars. The business of preparing the leather, for the shoe maker, gives employment to a great number of men.

The making of the shoes, fit for the market, gives employment to hundreds of men and women in Danvers, and other towns in the County of Essex. The number of bushels of onions, raised the last year, on the Plains, was three thousand five hundred, estimated value per bushel, fifty cents. This is but a small number compared with the hundreds of bushels, raised in Danvers. Danvers is a famous place for raising onions, and it hardly admits of a doubt that they do not beat Wethersfield in Connecticut. There is one bakery, which makes into bread, cake, &c., five hundred barrels of flour; investment ten thousand dollars; a wholesale and retail store of iron and tin ware, the length, and breadth of the building, is 28 feet by 60, three stories in height; investment ten thousand dollars. One furniture store, investment one thousand dollars. There are five stores, four of which retail groceries, and dry goods. ONE, the Union store, retails groceries, and earthen ware. The owner of one of these stores imports annually, three thousand barrels of flour, and forty thousand bushels of rye, corn and oats. There are three wheelwrights and carriage makers; two carriage painters; three blacksmiths; three house painter's shops; three masons; four carpenter's shops. The business of erecting buildings, gives employment to a large number of men, as there are a great number of buildings in process of erection, at the present time; and at the opening of the ensuing spring, more are to be erected. There is a drover of neat cattle, sheep, and swine, who deals largely in that trade and supplies not only Danvers with live stock, but Salem and the adjoining towns. North Danvers Post office is established here; there are two restorators. There is a manufactory for stitching leather, preparatory to its being made into shoes, which has seven machines in operation. There is one grist mill, belonging to the heirs of the late Judge Putnam, the age of which no man living can tell—probably the oldest grist mill in North Danvers. There are two Physicians, two Justices of the Peace, one tavern, the Nauinkeag house, the proprietor of which being INDEPENDENT, has not taken a license, not caring to get much custom, but merely keeps his

house open for the accommodation of the wayfarer and stranger. There are two tailors, one milliner's shop, four Butchers, one provision store, one livery stable, the owner of which is always at his post, by night and day to accommodate the public with horses, suitable for any carriage, from a gig up to a coach. There is an hourly coach, and omnibus, which will convey you to Salem, and back again, from early morning to late in the evening, driven by careful, and accommodating drivers. There are two rail roads, the Essex, and Georgetown & Danvers, which will carry you to Boston, and back again, ten times each day. And why speculators go to Wilmington, and Melrose, to sell house lots to build upon when they could make so much better investment on Danvers Plains, in which is included "Lindall's Hill," one of the most eligible places to build upon, in the County of Essex, puzzles me. Let some of these speculators come here, and if I have misrepresented this location, I will stand condemned by the whole company. We have streets through our village, which have appropriate names, and along the sides of many of them are shade trees of various kinds. There has been for many years a laudable ambition, to cultivate the various kinds of fruit trees that are indigenous to our climate. Among those who have done the most for their cultivation, was the late Judge Putnam. For many years he took unwearied pains to accomplish this object, as his orchard will abundantly show. Others have followed his example, as will be made manifest to any one who travels through our village. Whether the people here have read Walter Scott's historical novel of the "Heart of Mid Lothian," or not, they follow the advice of the old Scotch Laird, to his son Dumbiedikes, which was this: "Be always sticking out a tree, for that grows when you are asleep."

Thus, in my historical sketch, I have endeavored minutely to give an account of Danvers Plains as it was fifty years since, and as it is now, both with regard to its boundaries, its population, and its industrial pursuits. When speaking of the religious society established here, I did not mention that a considerable portion of its population attended other churches

for religious worship. There are three churches, all of them within a mile of this village, two of which are different denominations of Christians from the one here, one a Baptist, one a Universalist, and a Congregationalist, besides a number of Catholics who attend their church in Salem. I am sorry to say that many of our population never attend any religious meeting. It was not so fifty years since—every person then attended church somewhere.

Allow me, an old man who wishes you no harm, but much good, to kindly advise the young and rising generation, to connect themselves with some religious society. Go to some church where you can receive religious and moral instruction. It will promote your happiness here, and you will never regret it when you enter an unseen world. But if you **WILL** not attend religious services on the Sabbath, read a sermon that no mere man was ever capable of writing, and which contains an epitome of all our moral and religious duties. I mean Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Read it my **YOUNG FRIENDS**, and square your lives in accordance with its doctrines and moral principles, and you will be happier, wiser and better while you live, and be better fitted for a future state of existence. Where now are those, who, fifty years since, were just arrived at manhood? Gone, almost all gone, and only here and there an aged man and woman left, to tell their history. Where will you be, who have arrived at manhood, who are full of hope, of enterprise, of bright aspirations, who are in the midst of enjoyment, health, and sanguine expectations of a long life,—where will the great majority of you be half a century from this time? Why! where the generation that have passed away are; in yonder cemetery, or grave yard, which will be the case not only with you in this little village, but of the vast population of men that are in the world, full of life and hope, except here and there a few, who have outlived the common age of man. A new generation of men and women, who are now just springing into life, will take your places; and it behoves you, the present generation, to see to it that both their educational, moral and religious culture,

shall be such, that when they come into active life, and occupy the places that you now fill in society they may not disgrace their predecessors. One more reflection, and I will close my sketch of Danvers Plains. It is this. I anticipate that fifty years from this time, that whoever lives, will see the Plains covered with a dense population, and "Lindall Hill" laid out in broad and handsome streets, covered over with neat and substantial houses, and buildings appropriate for the various purposes of industry, like those in the vale below. A school house for the purpose of educating the rising generation, to become useful members of society. A church dedicated to the worship of the one true God, with its spire rising towards heaven, and a united and happy Christian Society.— So you will go on increasing in wealth, morality and religion, until, as in the language of England's great poet, and immortal Bard, not only this **LITTLE SPOT** which we inhabit, but the whole world,

" Will be melted into air, into thin air ;
 And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
 The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which we inherit, shall dissolve ;
 And like this insubstantial pageant faded,
 Leave not a rack behind."

A few remarks, and I will close my historical sketch of Danvers Plains. My object has been to show what was its history, and who were its original owners, with a number of interesting reminiscences of ancient times ; what was its population fifty years ago, and what it is now. That some antiquarian friend will preserve at least **ONE** copy to facilitate the writer, in his researches, who may better perform the task fifty years hence, is the sincere wish of the writer of the foregoing historical sketch.

GEORGE OSGOOD.

APPENDIX.

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I noticed, when giving a history of the late Judge Lindall, that I had a will which conveyed the land, which he owned in Danvers, to Thomas Lindall Winthrop, of Boston, and Richard Bayard Winthrop, of New York.—Judge Lindall's will was made in July, 1677. He died Oct. 28, 1679, when the above named gentlemen, by will, became its owners. They held it in possession until 1795, and then sold it to the late William Burley, Esq., of Beverly. The bounds of this estate, which was conveyed by the Messrs. Winthrop, are the following lots and parcels of land, with all the buildings thereon, situate, lying, and being partly in Danvers in said county of Essex, and partly in Beverly aforesaid, one of which lots of land contains seventy acres, more or less, and is bounded, beginning at the corner of the Topsfield and Ipswich roads, thence running north east to land now or late of Larkin Thordike, thence north-west by the last said land, until it comes to the Topsfield road, thence south and south-east upon said road to the bound first mentioned. Also, one other piece of wood land and orcharding, containing forty acres, more or less, bounded, beginning at the corner of the Topsfield and Middleton roads, thence running north upon said Topsfield road, to land now or late of Henry Putnam, thence north-west, upon land of said Henry and Aaron Putnam, thence south upon land now or late of Thomas Towns, to the Middleton road, thence upon said road to the bound first mentioned. And also another piece of land containing seventy acres, more or less, bounded, beginning at the corner of the Topsfield and Middleton roads, thence running north-west upon the Middleton road, to land now or late of Thomas Towns, thence running southwest upon land last mentioned, and upon land now or late of Matthew Whipple, thence southeast and east on the land last mentioned partly, and partly on land of Gideon Putnam and Ezra Batchelder, till it comes to the Topsfield and Middleton roads first mentioned, the same lots being in said Danvers.

The careful reader will perceive by the ancient document I have produced, that Judge Lindall owned a large moiety of the land on Danvers Plains north of the road leading from Ipswich to Danvers, and that John Porter or others of that name owned two hundred and twenty acres south and south-east of the eastern road boundary, terminating at the crossing of the old Ipswich road and Village street, near the Essex railroad depot. On the westerly side

of the old Ipswich road, commencing at the crossing of the Ipswich road at Village street near said depot, thence running south-easterly on the old Ipswich road to Crane River Bridge, thence running up a brook in a devious course, to the entrance of Walnut Grove Cemetery, thence passing on to Tapleyville or Danvers Centre, as it is now called, thence running easterly on Village street, by the farm house of the late Judge Putnam, thence running in the same direction to the bounds first mentioned, near the Essex depot. This moiety of the land on the Plains, according to the best account I can procure, belonged originally to a man by the name of Nathaniel Putnam, brother of one of the ancestors of that numerous and respectable race of Putnams who dwell in this village, and elsewhere, in Danvers.

In giving this history of the owners of that tract of territory, I may not have satisfied my antiquarian friends; but with unwearyed search of antiquarian documents, I am satisfied that I have given nearly a correct description.

I mentioned in my historical sketch, that fifty years since there was but one grocery store on the Plains. An antiquarian friend has furnished me with a history of store-keeping there, *one hundred and sixty eight years since*. The store, or shop-keeper as it was called in that day, was Goodwife Bishop, the wife of Edward Bishop. The shop stood near by the spot where that elegant building, the Village Bank, now stands. She sold eider, beer, tape, and pins. She was prosecuted by the authorities, for permitting young men to play shovel-board, probably a game somewhat like checkers of our day. The result was, that her business was suspended. The woman who made a complaint against Goodwife Bishop, became insane, accused Goodwife Bishop of being a witch, and cut her throat with a pair of scissors. Goodwife Bishop was tried for witchcraft, convicted, and was the first person who was executed in 1692, when that fanatical delusion prevailed, which has thrown a stigma on the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, of that day, but more especially on *Salem Village*, that will never be obliterated.

